

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of operating a combined on-line and physical retail store for an on-line shopper, comprising the steps of:

receiving at a web server ~~a request~~ an order for an item by an on-line shopper;

determining via the server an approximate quantity of the item available for purchase by the on-line shopper;

adjusting via the server the approximate quantity responsive to a quantity-held estimate of a number of units of the item held by in-person shoppers who physically removed said units of the item from inventory prior to checkout by the in-person shoppers to provide an adjusted quantity;

comparing via the server the adjusted quantity with a first threshold; and

when the adjusted quantity is less than the first threshold, invoking a corrective action.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held estimate is dependent upon an average number of the item

1 purchased historically during a specified period of time.

1 3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held
2 estimate is dependent upon a time of day.

1 4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held
2 estimate is dependent upon a day of a week.

3 5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held
4 estimate is dependent upon proximity to a holiday.

1 6. (cancelled)

2 7. (cancelled)

1 8. (cancelled)

1 9. (previously amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step
2 of invoking includes the steps of monitoring the approximate
3 quantity when the adjusted quantity is less than the first
4 threshold, and informing the on-line shopper when the approximate
5 quantity falls below a second threshold.

1 10. (cancelled)

1 11. (currently amended) A computer program product for
2 instructing a server to operate a combined on-line and physical
3 retail store, the computer program product comprising:

4 a computer readable medium;

5 first program instruction means for receiving at a web
6 server ~~a request~~ an order for an item by an on-line shopper;

7 second program instruction means for determining via the
8 server an approximate quantity of the item available for purchase
9 by the on-line shopper;

10 third program instruction means for adjusting via the server
11 the approximate quantity responsive to a quantity-held estimate
12 of a number of units of the item held by in-person shoppers who
13 physically removed said units of the item from inventory prior to
14 checkout by the in-person shoppers to provide an adjusted
15 quantity;

16 fourth program instruction means for comparing via the
17 server the adjusted quantity with a first threshold; and

18 fifth program instruction means for when the adjusted
19 quantity is less than the first threshold, invoking a corrective
20 action; and wherein

1 all said program instruction means are recorded on said
2 medium.

3 12. (currently amended) A method of deploying process software
4 for operating a combined on-line and physical retail store, the
5 method comprising:

6 installing the process software on a web server; and

7 invoking the process software to perform the steps of:

8 receiving at a web server ~~a request~~ an order for an item by
9 an on-line shopper;

10 determining via the server an approximate quantity of the
11 item available for purchase by the on-line shopper;

12 adjusting via the server the approximate quantity responsive
13 to a quantity-held estimate of a number of units of the item held
14 by in-person shoppers who physically removed said units of the
15 item from inventory prior to checkout by the in-person shoppers
16 to provide an adjusted quantity;

17 comparing via the server the adjusted quantity with a first
18 threshold; and

1 when the adjusted quantity is less than the first threshold,
2 invoking a corrective action.
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